
Personal Review

I. The Enlightenment: The "Age of Reason" (c. 1750-1900)

The Enlightenment was a secular movement that moved away from religious control and emphasized using logic and observation to find truth.

- **Key Philosophers and Ideas:**

- **John Locke:** Argued for **natural rights** (life, liberty, and property) that all men are born with. He proposed a "natural contract" where the government's sole purpose is to protect these rights; if it fails, the people have the right to change their ruler.
- **Thomas Hobbes:** Believed humans were naturally "selfish and greedy". He argued for an **absolute ruler** to maintain order and prevent people from acting only on self-interest.
- **Baron de Montesquieu:** To prevent tyranny, he argued that government power should be divided into branches (Legislative, Executive, and Judicial). This is the **separation of powers**.
- **Jean-Jacques Rousseau:** Focused on the **General Will**, stating that the population should be the ones making laws. He believed a **Social Contract** existed where people give up some freedoms in exchange for government protection.
- **Voltaire:** A fierce advocate for the **freedom of expression** and religion. He famously scorned the church for its intolerance and argued that religion should remain a private practice.
- **Mary Wollstonecraft:** Challenged the idea that women were less smart than men and argued for **women's right** to be rational and free.
- **Cesare Beccaria:** Argued that the **accused have rights**, condemned torture and the death penalty, and believed punishment should fit the crime.

- **Methods of Spread:** Because authorities tried to censor these ideas, thinkers gathered in **salons** (private social groups, often hosted by women) to share ideas orally.
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II. Age of Revolutions (Late 18th - 19th Century)

Enlightenment ideals directly inspired several major revolutions against oppressive or colonial governments.

- **American Revolution (1776):** Sparked by resentment over British taxation (to pay for the Seven Years War) without representation in Parliament. The colonists used Locke's ideas to justify breaking from Britain and established a republic.
 - **French Revolution (1789):** Driven by the **Third Estate** (97% of the population, including peasants and the middle class), who were poor, taxed heavily, and lacked political power.
 - The **National Assembly** adopted the "Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen".
 - It descended into the **Reign of Terror** (1792), a period of mass executions led by Maximilien Robespierre.
 - **Haitian Revolution (1792):** The only successful **slave revolt** in history, led by Toussaint Louverture. It debunked theories of African inferiority but became violent during the 1804 massacres of the French.
 - **Latin American Revolutions (1819-1830):** Led by **Creole** (American-born Spaniards) elites like **Simon Bolivar**, who were inspired by the Enlightenment and nationalism. Bolivar liberated Venezuela, Colombia, and Ecuador to form "Gran Colombia".
 - **Nationalism:** A growing trend where people identify based on race, culture, and language rather than loyalty to a monarch or religion.
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III. The Industrial Revolution and Capitalism

- **Capitalism:** Adam Smith codified this in *The Wealth of Nations*. It moved away from **Mercantilism** (government control of prices/wages) to a **Free Market** where competition ensures low prices and high quality.
- **The "Invisible Hand":** Smith's idea that the self-interest of suppliers to make a profit naturally meets the needs of society.

- **Why Britain First?** Britain had natural resources (coal, iron), a stable banking system, and a government that protected private property and removed trade limitations like guilds.
 - **Mechanization:** Replacing human workers with machines. Inventions like the **Steam Engine** (James Watt) allowed factories to move away from rivers and be powered by coal.
 - **Social Changes:**
 - **Middle Class:** Factory owners, bankers, and professionals who grew in power.
 - **Working Class:** Poor laborers facing 14-hour workdays, dangerous conditions, and low wages.
 - **Socialism/Communism:** Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels developed **Marxism** in 1848, arguing that history is a struggle between the Bourgeoisie (owners) and the Proletariat (workers). They called for a violent revolution to eliminate **private property**.
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IV. Imperialism and Global Power (19th Century)

- **The Scramble for Africa:** After technologies like **Quinine** (to fight malaria) and **Steamships** allowed Europeans to enter the African interior, the **Berlin Conference** (1884) divided the continent among European powers without African input.
- **Imperialism in Asia:**
 - **The Opium Wars:** Britain forced China to open trade by addicting the population to opium. China was eventually divided into **Spheres of Influence** by foreign powers.
 - **The British Raj:** Direct British rule over India following the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny.
- **Japan's Meiji Restoration (1868):** After being forced open by the US (Commodore Matthew Perry), Japan overthrew its Shogunate and rapidly industrialized by mimicking Western military and economic systems.

- **Social Darwinism:** The pseudoscientific belief that some races were "fitter" than others, used to justify the "White Man's Burden" of conquering and "civilizing" the world.
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V. Global Conflicts: WWI and WWII

- **World War I (1914-1918):**
 - **Causes:** Militarism, Alliances, Imperialism, and Nationalism (MAIN).
 - **Trench Warfare:** Resulted in a stalemate and massive casualties on the Western Front.
 - **Treaty of Versailles:** Ended the war but humiliated Germany, forcing it to take full blame and pay \$400 billion in today's money, which led to future resentment.
 - **World War II (1939-1945):**
 - **Rise of Fascism:** Totalitarian leaders like Hitler (Germany) and Mussolini (Italy) rose to power by promising to restore national glory and attacking "inferior" groups.
 - **Blitzkrieg:** "Lightning war" involving planes, tanks, and infantry used by Germany to overrun Europe.
 - **The Holocaust:** The systemic murder of 6 million Jews and 5 million others by the Nazis.
 - **Pacific Theater:** Ended after the US dropped atomic bombs on **Hiroshima and Nagasaki**.
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VI. The Cold War and the Modern Era (1945-Present)

- **Cold War (1947-1991):** An indirect conflict between the US (Capitalism) and the USSR (Communism) defined by **Proxy Wars** (Korea, Vietnam) and **Espionage**.
- **Decolonization:** Weakened by WWII, European powers lost their colonies.

- **India:** Achieved independence in 1947 through **Mahatma Gandhi's** mass civil disobedience (non-violence). This led to the **Partition** of India and Pakistan.
 - **Vietnam:** Ho Chi Minh led a communist movement that eventually defeated the French and later the US.
- **The Green Revolution (1950s-60s):** New chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and genetic engineering vastly increased the global food supply and population.
- **Globalization:** The connection of world economies via trade organizations like the **WTO** and technology like the Internet. It created "Knowledge Economies" (US, Japan) and manufacturing hubs (China, Mexico).
- **Human Rights:** The **United Nations** (1945) passed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 to guarantee freedom and equality globally.